

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, September 20, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. Sunday, Sept. 20, (1908) Alec darling:

I am sending you charts, those the photographer gave me and those I made for you. The trouble with yours was that it came out white lines on black and I could not see how you were going to fill in the parts on black paper. The new ones were traced over your model in 2 lines and the intersections filled up with black paint, it took me two or three hours to do it. Please do fill in an eight symbol word, we can't get more. Please do this for me.

I can't get over Tom's being taken. I can't realize it, it doesn't seem possible. Isn't it heart-breaking? Yet and yet it is better for him than to die as poor Langley did. He was so happy to the very end. I know he would have said he was having the time of his life and though he must have realized his danger, those last seconds he would still hope to escape and he had no time for unavailing regrets. It was the happiest way death could come to him now, but why need it to have come now when he was ready to put to his country's use all the results of his long patient preparation. I feel I never realized how dear and good he was. I find all the old women here heart-broken for his dear sake, he was so good to them and what higher testimonial could a young fellow have. How few will turn aside in their gay happy lives and full interests to be kind to the broken old women with nothing attractive about them but that they were women and he a knightly boy. I miss the thought of him so. Nobody ever did so many little things for me as he. Others have 2 loved me more of course but he just saw the little things, pushing up my chair at table or bringing a screen to shut off a draught, all so quietly and unobtrusively no one noticed. I am so sorry for you, dear, in this breaking of your beautiful association. But it was beautiful and the memory of it will endure.

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Bell, Curtiss, Baldwin, Selfridge and McCurdy, it was indeed a "brilliant coterie" as one paper said. Do anything you think best but let the A.E.A. be only those to the end and take some other name. Give my love to them all and lets hold tight together, all the tighter for the one that a gone. Casey called me the "little mother of us all" and so I want to be. I love all our boys and there can't be any others just the same.

Come back to me as soon as you can and bring them all.

Your loving Mabel. And Daisy, David and Alexander IV too. Take care of yourself Sandie dear. How I hated waking you up that day. I am sorry about the bulletin. I wrote out what I wanted said about the postscript but Mr. Cox preferred his own version and I didn't know he had changed it until it was all gotten together. He would have had to rewrite the whole title page and the first page of the P.S. and it was so late I didn't like to insist.